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ABSTRACT

Nonverbal teacher behavior is recognized as an important factor in establishing a positive social climate in the classroom. A feedback and analysis instrument is presented focusing on specific nonverbal teacher behaviors. These behaviors--facial expressions, gestures, body movements, and idiosyncratic characteristics--are categorized as either positive or negative. Symbols are used to designate categories and serve as memory clues for tabulation during observation of a teacher. This instrument may be used by a teacher for self evaluation purposes, and in this case a video tape of classroom performance is essential. It may also be used as an observation instrument by peers, principals, and teacher educators for the purpose of providing feedback to a teacher. The instrument is not an evaluation device: it is to be used as a means to tabulate nonverbal actions. Value judgements may be made after collection and interpretation of data. The instrument itself is included in this training manual and guidelines for observers are provided. (JD)

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TRAINING MANUAL

FOCUSED OBSERVATIONS: NONVERBAL TEACHING BEHAVIOR

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Introduction

Language is a necessary commodity for teachers to convey concepts to students. The components of language include verbal, nonverbal and printed materials. Student interpretation of teacher language has immediate impact upon learning, as well as classroom climate. People work more effectively and productively when they are in happy, compatible relationships. Creation of and maintenance of an effective learning situation are primary responsibilities of the teacher. Learning climate is a direct result of student interpretation of teacher behavior and language use. It follows then the teacher must be constantly aware of the impact his behavior has on the learning climate. This awareness can be vastly increased when systematic analysis is conducted of objectively obtained data. To that end, the authors have developed the Focused Observation and Feedback of Nonverbal Behavior instrument.

Background

Teachers and teacher trainers have long recognized the importance and significance of nonverbal behavior. Descriptions of effective management techniques frequently include suggestions to the teacher for certain nonverbal behaviors. Among the items generally included are:

1. Use of proximity control in maintaining discipline.
2. Emphasis on the need for eye contact as a speaker.
3. Need for close proximity with children.
4. Impact and effect of direct physical contact.
5. Varying the stimuli within the classroom.
6. Impact and effect of teacher nonverbal behavior on the social, emotional and psychological climate in the classroom.

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Development of a nonverbal analysis and feedback procedure is a product of previous work by the author relative to the analysis of verbal behavior of classroom teachers. A preliminary instrument for nonverbal analysis was developed in 1975. This instrument provided the basis for a pilot study with student teachers during the 1976-77 academic year. A revised instrument was developed for study during 1977-78.

Video tapings of 21 student teachers were completed during their final weeks of student teaching. The validity and reliability of the proposed instrument was established through the utilization of these video tapes. (See ED 153953, September, 1978, and ED 163001, April, 1979, ERIC Documents for reports on the development process.)

Basic Assumptions

The focused observation and feedback instrument is based upon several assumptions. Among these are:

1. That there exists a nonspoken body language in a given culture which transmits meaning to others within that culture.
2. That this nonverbal "language" can be observed and classified.
3. That observers of teaching behavior can be trained to classify and measure nonverbals with accuracy and agreement.
4. That the utilization of a language of nonlanguage--i.e. the use of symbols and abbreviations is less cumbersome, swifter and more specific than most conventional means of reporting nonverbal behavior.
5. That providing teachers with feedback relative to their nonverbal behavior with students should facilitate a more positive social, emotional and psychological climate of interpersonal interaction.
6. That guidelines and tabulation rules to govern procedures for the quantitative evaluation of qualitative data can be established.
7. That analysis of data will provide clues identifying effective teaching behaviors.
8. That analysis of nonverbal behavior will provide generalizations to guide the development of teacher education programs.
9. That similarities of nonverbal patterns of behavior can be determined which describe effective and ineffective teachers.

10. That student learning outcomes are specifically affected by positive and negative nonverbal teaching behaviors.

Conclusions Resulting from the Process to Develop the Instrument

The Focused Observation Instrument for Nonverbal Behavior has been sufficiently tested to demonstrate its validity and reliability as a means of assisting in the analyzation of nonverbal behavior. The consistency of satisfactory inter-observer reliability coefficients demonstrated that the categories are satisfactorily defined, are valid categories which occur in teaching situations and were consistently recorded by observers using the instrument.

The following are the significant generalizations derived from the instrument development:

1. The instrument should be used for self-evaluation by an individual teacher and/or peer evaluation.
2. The instrument should be used by supervisors as one method to provide detailed, objective feedback to teachers.
3. Nonverbal behavior has significant impact on instruction. It is the key item that determines the classroom climate in any given situation. Students immediately react to nonverbal behavior. interpretation of a teacher's nonverbal behavior appears to be a primary means of determining the credibility of a teacher by the student. Eye contact, appropriate gestures, the use of smiles and the lack of idiosyncratic behaviors seem essential if an effective, positive atmosphere of learning is to be maintained.
4. Nonverbal controls are essential for classroom management techniques. Teachers who rely primarily upon verbal means of maintaining discipline interfere with the educational process. Nonverbal control has the least interference and tends to be effective if consistently employed by a teacher. It is recognized that such controls must be supplemented, when necessary, by verbal action.
5. The instrument does not determine effective teaching. It does, however, provide an objective record of nonverbal behavior.

Value judgments should be made based upon stated assumptions which describe effective teaching.

Procedure to Prepare for Tabulation

The Instrument (Copy attached.)

Training to use the instrument may be accomplished by applying the following:

1. Study the definitions provided for each symbol. As tabulation is practiced and verified, definitions will become personal. Self-evaluation techniques require consistency in tabulation. Definitions of specific categories among observers may vary slightly.

   Note: The developers deliberately chose to use symbols to designate categories. These serve as significant memory clues for tabulation and aids the swift tabulating that must occur.
2. Study the Tabulation Guidelines for Observers. (See attached.)

   Note: These represent the rules to assist in developing tabulation techniques and additional interpretation of procedures.
3. A video taping machine is essential to use the instrument for self-evaluation.
4. Peer evaluation (in-class observation by a trusted person) is recommended to supplement video taping. However, the single most important item to achieve in self-evaluation is a consistent pattern of tabulation rather than adherence to a set of rules. Application of the instrument for research that includes several observers would require establishment of inter-observer reliability.

Practice Procedures

An effective way to develop individual tabulation techniques is to video tape a teaching session. This will permit the replay of segments when necessary.

1. Select a segment, two to five minutes in length, for practice purposes. It is good if there are several different nonverbals apparent. View the setment a number of times, identifying all nonverbals according to the instrument definitions.

2. Using the same segment, tabulate at least three times. If you have 80 per cent similarity in tabulation, you are ready to proceed.
3. Select another segment five to eight minutes in length and tabulate three times. If you have 80 per cent similarity in tabulation, your proficiency is probably sufficient to begin regular use.
4. It is productive to have three to four (maximum of four) in a peer group for training. This permits careful discussion of category definition and identification. Remember, the primary concern in self-evaluation is consistency in tabulation. It will be necessary for a group to compare tabulations and, through discussion, agree on the definitions and rules to guide tabulation. For example, when does a gesture end? These should be simplified as much as possible.
5. Another productive technique is to have two or three observers tally a class session while also video taping. Then replay the video tape for comparison with the tabulation. This procedure will help identify the possible influence of student reaction in relation to the tabulation procedure. Caution: actual video taping and live tallying must be synchronized. The camera operator must signal the time for tabulation to start. This can be accomplished by the audio recording of the command, "Begin tally." Replay of the tape for the same segment, therefore, is easily identified.
6. Continued practice with the instrument will provide confidence and assurance of consistency in tabulation.

Recommended Use

The instrument is intended to assist in the following:

1. Self-evaluation through the use of a cideo tape recorder.
2. Peer evaluation of nonverbal teaching behavior.
3. Use by principals and teacher educators as a means of feedback to a teacher.
4. Research purposes.

Reminder: the instrument is not of itself an evaluation device. There is no definition of effective or "good" teaching intended in the category

definitions. The organization of the 14 categories does not imply a scale but rather simply a means to tabulate nonverbal actions. Value judgments must be made after the collection of data. These value judgments will undoubtedly vary according to individual definitions of "good" teaching.

Inter-Observer Reliability

Consistency of tabulations is needed when the instrument is being used for specific research purposes. The developers used Scott's Formula[1] for this purpose. However, teachers using the instrument for self-evaluation or with peers can effectively use a procedure developed by Emmer and Millett.[2] This formula is:

$$\text{Observer Agreement} = 1 - \frac{A - B}{A + B}$$

The formula requires the total tabulation for each observer. "A" is always the larger, regardless of the observer involved. An example follows:

1. Total the number of tabulations by Observer #1 and Observer #2 for each category.
2. Obtain a grand total for all 14 categories by each observer. For the purpose of illustration, suppose Observer #1 has 170 total tabulations, and Observer #2 has 180 total tabulations.
3. Observer #2 becomes "A" of the formula because of the rule "A" is always the larger total of the two.
4. Thus our equation for Observer Agreement would be:

   180 = A for Observer #2

   170 = B for Observer #1

   Substituting:

(Continued next page.)

[1] William H. Scott, "Reliability of Content Analysis: The Case of Nominal Scale: Coding," Public Opinion Quarterly (Fall, 1953), pp. 321-25.

[2] Edmund T. Emmer and Gregg B. Millett, Improving Teaching Through Experimentation: A Laboratory Approach (Englewood, N.J.: Prentiss Hall, 1970), p. 23.

$$1 - \frac{A - B}{A + B} = 1 - \frac{180 - 170}{180 + 170}$$

$$= 1 - \frac{10}{350}$$

$$= 1 - .03$$

$$= .97$$

A coefficient of .97 indicates the degree of agreement among the observers. This would be an exceptionally high correlation. Any coefficient above .75 would be considered very satisfactory for tabulating nonverbal behavior.

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* FOCUSED OBSERVATION: NONVERBAL TEACHING BEHAVIOR-Tally Sheet *

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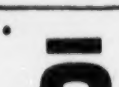
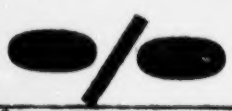
Teacher:_____ Observer:_____

Grade/Subject:_____ Time:_____ Date:_____

Type of Class:_____

1.		2.	
3. 		4.	
5.		6. 	
7.		8.	
9. Av		10. Ap	
11. Id		12. G	
13. NVC		14. VS	

COMMENTS:

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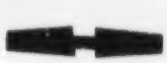
FOCUSED OBSERVATION: NONVERBAL TEACHING BEHAVIOR
Description of Symbols and Abbreviations

1.	Frowning; facial expressions of disgust, frustration, impatience or exasperation.
2.	The teacher presents a warm, friendly smile or pleasant grin to the class or an individual.
3.	Those facial expressions which are sarcastic, negative, tension creating and tend to discourage pupils from continuing to answer or discuss. Laughter or humor which is at the expense of the class or an individual.
4.	Those facial expressions which are positive, relaxing or tension-breaking and encourage pupils to continue to answer or discuss. Laughter or humor which is not at the expense of someone.
5.	Eye movement avoiding direct eye contact with pupils; looking out a window or at the ceiling, wall or floor. Leaving the impression of not listening, preoccupation or disinterest. Includes a detached appearance of pondering or thoughtfulness.
6.	Eye contact with an individual, group or the class. Eye contact at eye level. Giving the appearance of listening. Looking at pupil when talking or while pupil is talking.

7. 	Shaking of the head in a back-and-forth motion. Signals of disagreement, non-acceptance or disapproval.
8.	Nodding of the head in an up-and-down fashion. Signals of approval, agreement of acceptance of pupil behavior or statements.
9. **Av**	Avoidance. Aloofness or ignoring. Keeping a physical barrier between teacher/pupil. Avoids pupil touch or approach. Body contact which is punitive in nature.
10. **Ap**	Approach. Movement toward class or pupil. Circulates among pupils but not to distraction. Body contact which is warm and friendly such as touching pupil to signal approval.
11. **Id**	Idiosyncrasies that are usually distracting, such as: body movements, excessive manipulation of objects or nervous mannerisms, and inappropriate or incongruent behavior.
12. **G**	Gestures which tend to vary the stimuli--but are not distracting.
13. **NVC**	Nonverbal control. Moving toward a disturbance. Eye contact in the form of behavior control, such as a stare or glare in the direction of a disturbance. Placing hand on desk of a pupil or physically moving the pupil's chair.
14. **VS**	Manipulating the environment or an object which tends to vary the stimuli. May be use of the chalkboard, visual aids or a demonstration.

FOCUSED OBSERVATIONS: NONVERBAL TEACHING BEHAVIOR
TABULATION GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVERS

1. Category 1 is tabulated when facial or body expression is demonstrating dissatisfaction with students' conduct or work. A shift to Category 3 may occur when the length of the expression is having impact on relationships.
2. Category 2 is tabulated for a smile or laughter. When a smile is of lengthy duration, a tally in Category 4 would also be recorded.
3. Each specific separate eye contact focus would be tallied in Category 6. Eye contact should be with a specific student. Judgment must be exercised when eye movement is rapid or seems to be moving generally across all students. The teacher may be avoiding eye contact; then, the tally would be in Category 5.
4. Category 7 or 8 is marked for each separate occurrence of head movement identified as meaning "yes" or "no." Thus, one tally would be marked when a teacher uses head movement while responding to a student.
5. Category 9 is used when the teacher moves away from contact with the class. A specific tally is used for Category 10 when the teacher movement is toward the class. Movement away from the class, even when returning to a desk or lectern, is recorded in Category 9. The teacher may remain behind a desk or lectern. This would be noted as a characteristic but would not receive separate tallies in Category 9.
6. Category 11 is for all movements that result from nervous reactions or other distracting behaviors. Included are such items as scratching head, rubbing eyes, adjusting glasses or constant manipulation of objects.
7. Each separate gesture is tallied in Category 12, even when they may be in rapid order. A gesture is considered completed when the body

movement for the gesture has passed the climax point. A shrug is completed as one gesture when the shoulders are returned to a normal position. A hand gesture is completed when the movement has been stopped sufficiently to cause a change in hand direction. For example, using the hand to indicate a whirling motion would only be one gesture. But using the hand to emphasize three separate points, such as using fingers to designate a change from point one, two, three, etc., would be tallied as separate gestures. (Head movements are recorded in Categories 7 and 8 only.)

8. Category 13 is recorded only when of sufficient duration to be clearly identified as exercising control. It is not recorded in Category 13 when a teacher uses verbal action to secure attention or control. However, a teacher may use NVC and then shift to verbal control.
9. Category 14 occurs when there is a teaching aid or a specific change in routine. A tally is recorded for each separate use of the chalkboard. A math teacher, for example, could put a problem on the board and discuss its solution. When a second problem is added to the board, an additional tally would be recorded. The key for VS is a distinct change in routine that results in student shift of attention.
10. The recommended maximum period for tabulation should be in approximately five-minute segments. Routines of observation established by an observer should follow a consistent pattern. Class periods may be divided into appropriate time blocks with set tally time for each block.
11. Analysis of nonverbal patterns by an observer should include <u>key value</u> judgments concerning class operation. Among areas to be considered are:
    a. Teacher use of time for instruction.
    b. Adequacy of teacher planning.
    c. Adequacy of student preparation.

d. Teacher management and discipline procedures.

e. Appropriateness of teacher nonverbal behaviors.

f. Specific inconsistencies in teacher nonverbal behavior.

12. Use the following definitions to determine the "type of class."

a. TEACHER-CENTERED ACTIVITY is a lecture, presentation, clarification or a question/answer type of situation.

b. AN INDIVIDUALIZED SITUATION is when students are working independently, usually alone and self-directing.

c. GROUP WORK SITUATION is where students are working in committees. They may be involved in some type of project work requiring a committee report.

d. LEARNING CENTER SITUATION is when students are working independently or in small groups but at specific, designated learning stations. These stations may be math, science, language or topical interest areas.

e. A STUDY PERIOD is when students are engaged in independent work, usually with the direct supervision of the teacher.

f. A DEMONSTRATION SITUATION is a teacher-centered activity; such as, use of equipment.

g. OTHER situations will require a written description by the recorder.